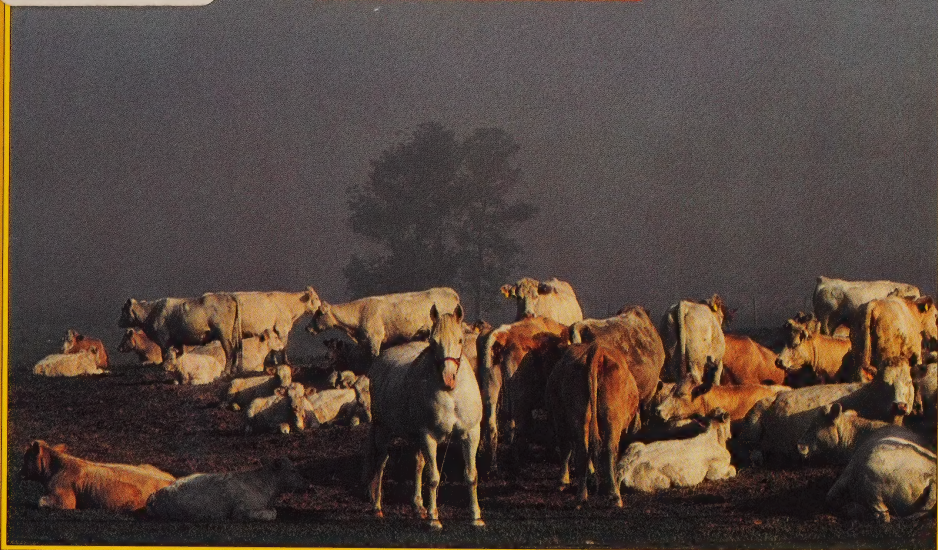


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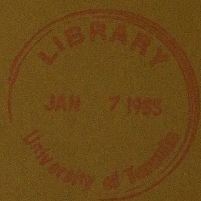


ONTARIO
1784-1984

Government
Publications



LIFE ON THE FARM



LIFE ON THE FARM

For the past 200 years, farmers have worked at the care and feeding of Ontario. They've kept us very comfortable; the happy beneficiaries of what's been called the finest food system in the world. How was it done? As you'll see, it's never been easy. But I think you'll agree it was always interesting.

Dennis Timbrell

DENNIS TIMBRELL, MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND FOOD



REUBEN SALLOW'S WAS A PHOTOGRAPHER WHO TRAVELLED THE FARMS OF SOUTHERN ONTARIO AT THE TURN OF THE CENTURY. He had with him a huge wooden field camera, heavy tripod, glass plates and an uncanny eye for

life on the farm. His photographs have caught forever a way of life that's gone forever. His shots are so good that it would be a shame to limit you to one or two. So here's a treat: a portfolio of Sallow's splendid work scattered throughout this book.



INDIANS WERE THE FIRST ONTARIO FARMERS. They were skilled at plant selection and taught both French and English settlers to grow corn, squash and kidney beans. They also introduced tobacco, (a sacred crop tended only by the

braves). It didn't take a man like Governor Haldimand long to recognize the Indian qualities of perseverance and loyalty. The tribes of the Six Nations were given free land, tools and seed. They returned the favour by helping the new white settlers

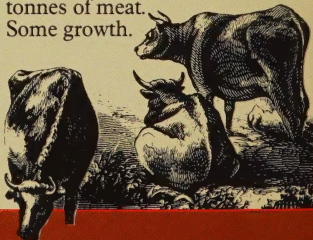
clear the land. Six Nation Indians even fought with the Loyalists to keep those lands from the Americans in the War of 1812. (By the way, the Six Nations settled near what is now Brantford, named for the Mohawk chief Joseph Brant.)



OUR FIRST EUROPEAN FARMERS WERE FRENCH, SETTLING IN WHAT IS NOW ESSEX COUNTY, ONTARIO AND AROUND DETROIT. (Even "Detroit" is French, meaning

"strait," a narrow passage between two bodies of water.) In fact, the oldest farm in the province is of French heritage. The Pajot family have worked this farm near La Salle continuously since about 1772.

BY 1782, ONTARIO HAD 17 FARMS, WITH 61 HEAD OF CATTLE, 30 SHEEP AND 103 HOGS. From a grand total of 236 acres, these farms produced: 206 bushels of wheat, 921 bushels of maize, 46 bushels of oats and 630 bushels of potatoes. Today, Ontario's 82,000 farms have 2,726,000 cattle, 245,000 sheep and lambs, 3,450,000 hogs. They produce 7 600 000 tonnes of grain, 1 870 000 tonnes of fruits and vegetables, 116 000 tonnes of butter and cheese, 610 700 tonnes of meat. Some growth.



THE Bearer *Peter Secord* having on the
 29th day of *March* 1790 preferred to this Board a Petition
 addressed to His Excellency the Governor in Council for a grant of *Two*
Hundred Acres of land in the Township of *Heb*
 in the District of *Napan* We have examined into his loyalty and
 character and find him duly qualified to receive a SINGLE LOT of about two hun-
 dred Acres, the oath of fidelity and allegiance directed by law having this day been
 administered to him by the board, in conformity to the fourth article of the Rules
 and Regulations aforementioned.

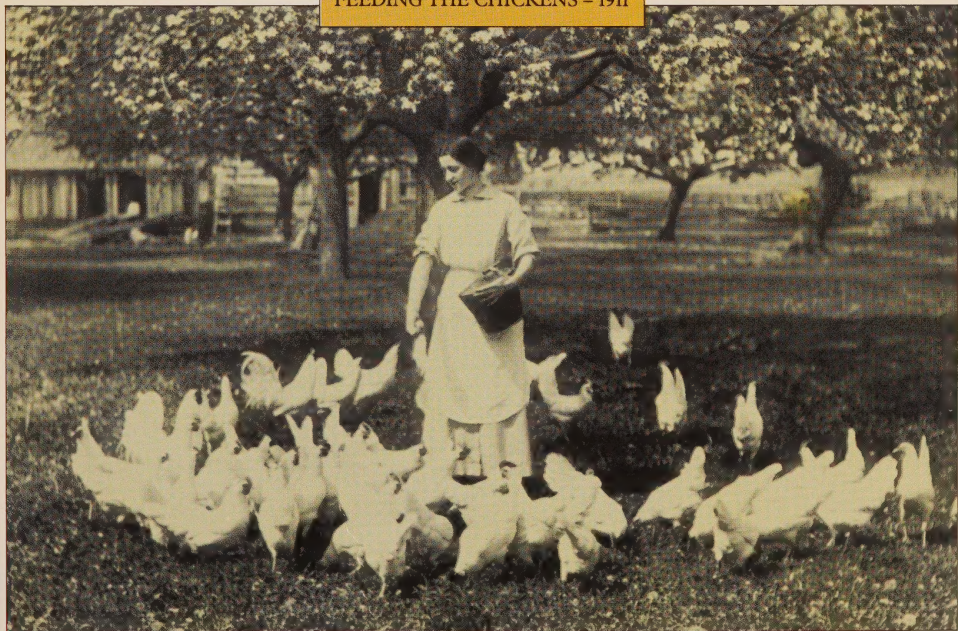
Given at the Board at *Napan* this *3^d*
 day of *January* one thousand seven hundred and *Ninety one*
 To *Augustus Jones* }
Acting Surveyor for the District of
Napan } *Peter Secord*
H. James

PETER SECORD
 SOLDIERED WITH
 BUTLER'S RANGERS,
 AN AMERICAN LOYALIST
 REGIMENT. In the early 1780's
 he crossed the Niagara River,
 took a 600 acre land-and-

implement grant from George III
 and started clearing. Secord
 the soldier was probably our first
 United Empire Loyalist farmer.
 Here's the paper to prove it, his
 land grant, now resting in

Canadian archives. Secord raised
 grain, potatoes, five horses, eight
 children and a famous niece:
 Laura. He also must have raised
 everyone's longevity hopes: it's
 said he lived to be one hundred
 and two years old.

FEEDING THE CHICKENS - 1911





Johnstown, Leeds and Grenville Counties, 1784

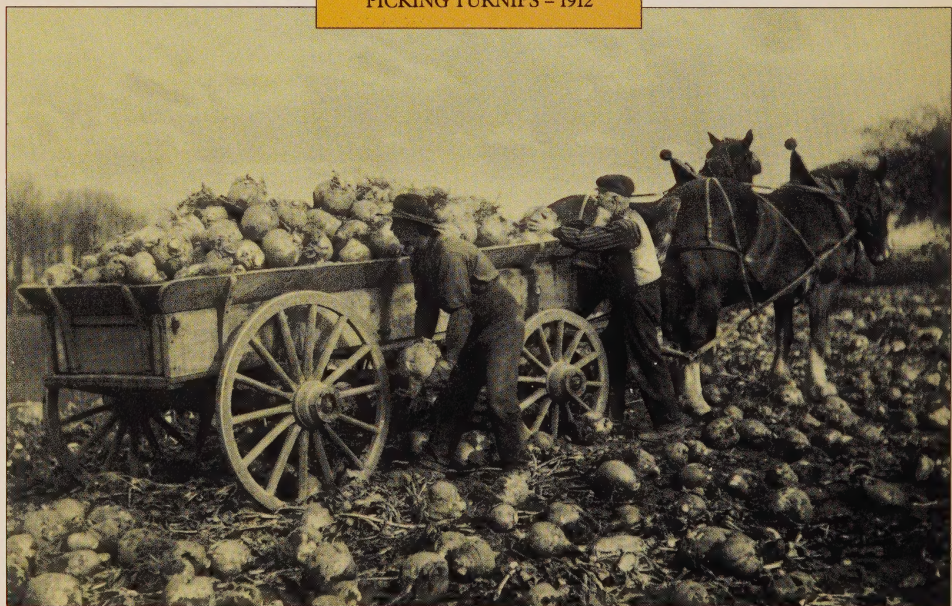
QUAKERS CAME, PENNSYLVANIA DUTCH AND MENNONITES, THE LATTER PRACTISING FARMING TODAY MUCH AS THEY DID THEN. By 1812, ninety thousand settlers of all stripes were clearing land and raising crops. Then came thousands of discharged soldiers from the British Isles, bringing their families to settle peacefully enough among ex-soldiers (and former enemies) from the United States. Then came the great waves of immigrants: refugees from the grinding horrors of the

industrial revolution in England and Scotland, from Ireland's potato famine, from the often harsh and inequitable legal systems prevalent.

TEN THOUSAND UNITED EMPIRE LOYALISTS POURED IN FROM THE JUST-BORN UNITED STATES OF AMERICA. They were mostly farmers, old hands at raising barns and clearing land. Unfortunately, many also came with nothing but experience. What they had owned was left behind,

with no chance of compensation from those who stayed. To the Americans, our Loyalists were their traitors. Fortunately for the UEL's (and for good farming in Ontario) the British Crown gave them free land to work, plus food, tools and seeds with which to start again. It was the United Empire Loyalists' petition to Westminster that led to the Constitutional Act of 1791, which created Upper and Lower Canada, the Ontario and Quebec of two hundred years ago.

PICKING TURNIPS – 1912



CIRCUIT-RIDING PREACHERS BROUGHT THE GOSPEL TO THE SCATTERED SETTLEMENTS, WHERE THE "CHURCHES" WERE OFTEN NO MORE THAN BARE MEETING HALLS. A circuit could cover as much as 250 miles with a dozen appointments strung through it. Comforts were minimal; besides a horse, the preacher "would carry a valise containing gown, surplice, books, communion elements, chalice and cup, with a great coat and umbrella strapped on it." He travelled alone, winter and summer. He was also under strict orders to get where he was supposed to get on time, because his farming parishioners had themselves come from miles away. It wasn't easy. William Case, (circuit rider for Ancaster) wrote in his diary for Sunday, November 14, 1808: "The hill was more than 150 feet high. The clay was so slippery my horse could not stand in many places. Sometimes his feet would slide from under and only find safety by landing against a tree. Then trembling, would again attempt to recover and again fail. But patient and faithful, he continued his exertion till we gained the top of the hill. Then, thro' a severe snow storm, till I came to my appointment, wet and weary." It will come as no surprise that circuit riders seldom lasted at their position for more than a year.



DUNDAS COUNTY, 1840: OPENING DAY FOR THE FIRST TREADMILL-POWERED THRESHING MACHINE WAS A DISASTER. Historian James Croil tells it: "One horse was firmly secured in his narrow and elevated stall. At the first revolution off came the belt. The astonished horse increased his velocity; the rattling din of the machinery revolving under his

feet terrified him to madness. The straps that secured the horse to the infernal machine gave way and with a whirl, he was violently discharged upon the floor, whence, with a couple of somersaults, and effecting a breach through the barn door, he eventually landed in the yard. Alarmed by the noise, the neighbours hastened to the scene and assisted in saving the pieces..." You can't win 'em all.

DAIRY MAIDS - 1907





Near Woodbridge, circa 1900

WORKING TEN HOURS A DAY, IT WOULD TAKE A FARMER A WHOLE SUMMER TO BUILD A BARN BY HIMSELF. But if his neighbours came to help, the work could get done in a couple of days. Later, the helped farmer would help one of the neighbours who had helped him. And so it went, farmers and wives and kids all pitching in to help each other one day in order to be helped themselves later on. This was the bee, a kind of work cooperative. There were all kinds of bees: quilting, apple-paring, butchering, lumber, corn husking and harvesting (mowing, stooking, threshing, winnowing) and the aforementioned barn raising. Everyone came early, as many as 100 to get a barn up, as few as five for butchering. They pitched in, ate a huge lunch (supplied by the grateful host) and worked 'til sundown. There was supper certainly, probably games and sporting events, then dancing for sure. The social part of the bee was as important as the work part; perhaps the only social life the lonely settlers ever saw. Bees not only made tedious work easier; they could even contribute to romance. Apple-paring bees were often held in the evening, one of the few times young men and women ever sat down together.

IN THE EARLY 1800'S A FARMER WAS LUCKY TO BE ABLE TO FEED HIS FAMILY. If there was anything left over, it was bartered for what he needed but could not make: powder and shot, salt, tea. Today a farmer can produce enough to feed himself, family and 90 other people besides! In fact, agriculture has grown from subsistence farming to a highly diversified industry worth some \$11 billion dollars to the province and giving work to one person in every five. Directly or indirectly, twenty percent of the people of Ontario make their living from agriculture.



By the mid-1800's, wheat was still Ontario's dominant crop. But wheat killers also existed: a gnat-like fly called midge and black stem rust. The farmer's anti-midge-and-rust technique was early planting and some haphazard attempts at new varieties. Then a transplanted Scot named David Fife started controlled experiments with a variety of grains. He produced a strain which matured very quickly, had a large, heavy head and resisted black rust. But even the splendid, high-yield Red Fife could not resist the number one killer, the dreaded midge. The pest struck with extra fury in 1858: eight million bushels wiped out at a cost of some two and a quarter million dollars. But Red Fife's day was yet to come. In 1906, Sir Charles Saunders combined it with another strain, Hard Red Calcutta. These two became Marquis, the wheat that allowed the west to be won. This strain let the prairie farmer beat the long, bitter winter with a remarkably short growing period.



COULD YOU GUESS HOW MANY FARMS THERE ARE IN ONTARIO THAT HAVE BEEN IN CONTINUOUS OPERATION FOR OVER 100 YEARS? Could you guess how many there are that are not

only 100 years old, but have been run under the same family name? The answer is over 6000! These include this splendid example of a southern Ontario spread and the Pajot farm you read about at the beginning of this book.

QUESTION: WHO WANTS A CHEDDAR CHEESE SIX FEET HIGH, TWENTY-EIGHT FEET AROUND AND THIRTEEN TONS HEAVY? Answer: The World Exposition, Chicago, 1893. They made the biggest cheese on earth in the CPR shed in Perth. Supported by huge beams, it was shipped by flatcar to Chicago, unloaded tenderly onto its exhibit platform and promptly crashed through to the floor below. No matter, it copped all the prizes. Always impressed by a winner, Thomas Lipton, the tea king, bought it and sent it to England, where they were not impressed; they thought it had gone bad. But some one had the good sense to carve off a foot of mould. Underneath was a superb two-year-old cheddar, enough to keep a multitude of English cheese fans gurgling with delight.

Perth, 1893





The town of Beeton didn't use to be called Beeton. Before 1874, it was called Clarksville. Clarksville was the home of David Allanson Jones, beekeeper extraordinary. Jones was fascinated by bees; they were not only a livelihood, they were a way of life. He was the first to import bee breeding stock from the Mediterranean. He then had the imagination to control breeding by keeping the strains isolated on various islands in Georgian Bay. Choice strains were sent out to start hives all over the world. He was the first to place honey on exhibit: Canadian National Exhibition, 1880; Colonial Exhibition, London, England, 1886. By 1884, the founder of commercial bee-ing had over 1,000 colonies! In fact, when he hit his stride, David Jones produced 70,000 pounds of honey a year. *That's thirty-five tons.*

THERE WERE SIX OF THEM TO BEGIN WITH; PIONEERS, EVERY ONE OF THEM. At first, they taught agriculture at the local high school. They also had a one-acre plot on which to experiment with crops. That was in 1907. Today the Agricultural Representative touches every aspect of life on the farm. He's a living conduit, pumping out up-to-date advice and information on everything from livestock breeding to soil improvement, from Junior Farmers to 4H clubs. At first, the idea that a college man could tell a farmer anything about farming did not exactly take root and flourish. But the Ag Reps persisted. Kids who were taught by those first six went on to the Ontario Agricultural College at Guelph to become vets, teachers, farmers and, yes, Ag Reps themselves. You'll be happy to know Ontario was the first jurisdiction to set up a system of representatives trained to help the farmer. By 1927, all 54 Ontario counties had an Ag Rep. (And still do, you'll be even happier to know.)

SHEEP IN THE MEADOW - 1919





IF ALEXANDER GRAHAM BELL DIDN'T HAVE THE FARMER IN MIND WHEN HE INVENTED THE TELEPHONE, HE SHOULD HAVE. Up 'til 1875, farms were completely isolated. The fastest way to get in touch was by horse. Sometimes, in winter, even that gallant animal couldn't get through. So the phone was a blessing and the farmer was ready to welcome it with open arms. Sadly, it was often not to be. The growth of the Bell system was confined to the cities, because there, the heavy capital investment in phone lines cost far less per subscriber. In fact, Bell told farm groups they would have to wait years to get connected. So they took matters into their own hands. The first private phone company in Ontario was set up in 1893. Three more followed within two years. Between 1905 and 1915, the growth was incredible. At one time, we had over 1,100 independent phone companies operating! Mind you, some were pretty small. Tamarik Telephone Line, Welland County had two subscribers! The Depression, World War II and commercial attrition cut this number drastically. Today there are 29 private phone companies plus Bell, and you'd have to search pretty hard to find a farm *not* equipped with Alexander's wonderful device. Everyone may not be able to order in a pizza, exactly. But nobody has to depend on the gallant horse, either.

Wentworth County, circa 1878

Circa 1905





Cobourg, 1910

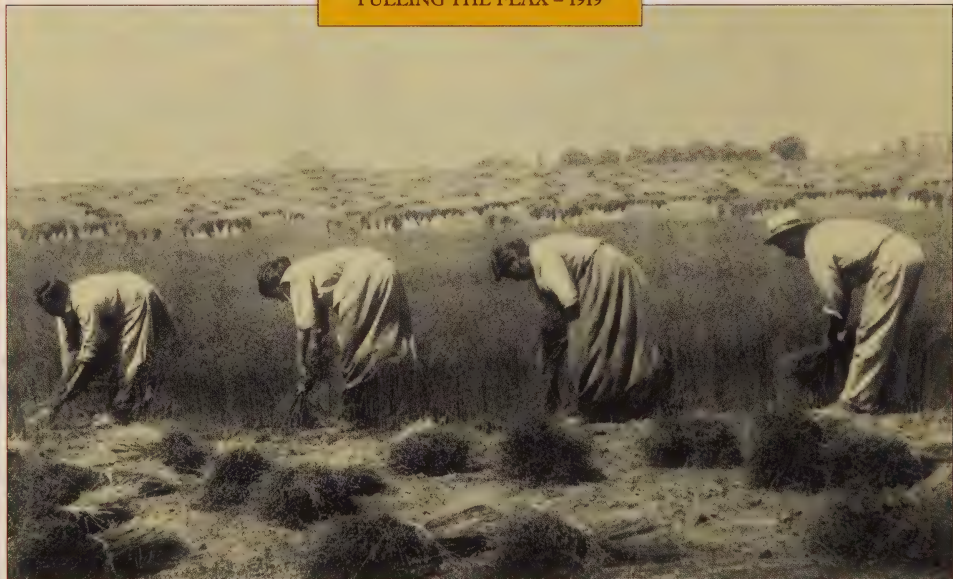
THE STAFF OF LIFE, THE DEMON WHISKY.

By the early 1800's wheat was Ontario's dominant crop. Grist mills sprang up in the boom towns of the day: Kingston, Niagara, muddy York. One of the first bills to be passed at the first session of the government of Upper Canada was a tax "to regulate the toll to be taken in mills". The mills ground the

wheat for flour shipped by water to the U.S. and to Montreal, (where it was sold on commission to Britain). Not all the grain ended as bread, however. What produced the staff of life also produced the demon whisky. A good deal of it was turned into mash by the farmer, then fermented and distilled. It was a time, apparently, of considerable

drunkenness and rowdiness. (There were 63 taverns on the Yonge Street stage route between Toronto and Barrie. It's a wonder anyone ever arrived.) In fact, whisky was so prevalent it became legal tender. You would swap it for anything except aspirin, which hadn't been invented yet.

PULLING THE FLAX – 1919





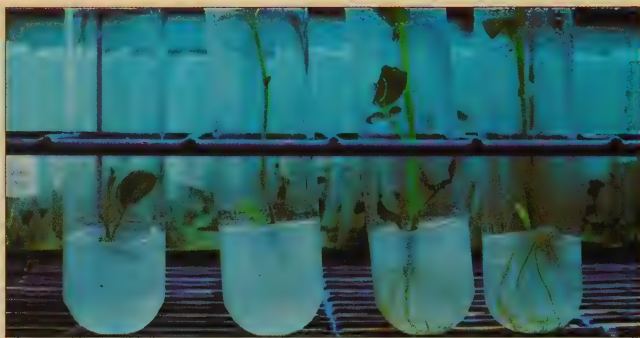
IN THE 1860'S, FARMING HAD VERY LITTLE TO DO WITH SCIENCE. The farmer did his best and hoped for the best. The best often didn't come. All too often, what came was bad weather, insect plagues, crop and animal disease. Tradition and chance were not producing. Could science be applied to farming? Many thought not. Farming was an art, how could it be learned from books? John Carling, Ontario's one-man Commissioner of Agriculture and Public Works, suspected science *could* be applied to farming and with great benefit. In 1874, Carling convinced his government to buy the Fred W. Stone farm just south of Guelph. Science and farming finally went to work together; they soon became inseparable. In spite of initial resistance (some of it very stubborn) the Ontario Agricultural College was off and running. The college worked under two principles: research and teaching. The research produced extraordinary results. The winter wheat variety "Dawson's Golden Chaff" is the father of today's pastry, cookie and shredded wheat industry. The disease-free strains of vegetables, the spray programs, the use of predator insects to devour plant parasites; all were developed at Guelph. The great breedstock strains were developed there: the first pedigree

Aberdeen Angus calf, the lean bacon hogs, the milk cows that produce an incredible annual average of over 10,000 pounds! (Much of the experimental work at Guelph is financed by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food. The ministry also operates five other agricultural colleges and eight research centres.) As for teaching, the college has turned out a contin-

uous stream of highly skilled veterinarians, agricultural representatives and teachers; fruit, dairy and meat inspectors; commercial field sales people and, of course, young farmers, trained to use science to take the chance out of farming. The Ontario citizen is blessed with one of the finest food systems in the world, no contest. Without OAC, we wouldn't even be close.



If Dolly Irwin hadn't emigrated here in 1796, John McIntosh, who loved her, wouldn't have come here either. If McIntosh hadn't come, he wouldn't have discovered 20 wild apple trees while clearing his land in Dundas County. If he hadn't selected one of those accidentally discovered trees on which to work his wonders, he wouldn't have produced the world famous McIntosh Red, with which millions have kept the doctor away. Thanks, Dolly.



POTATOES ARE PREY TO COSTLY DISEASES WHICH SHARPLY REDUCE CROP YIELD. Reduced crops mean higher prices. These are young seed potatoes, growing happily in their jelly-like culture at a Horticultural Experiment Station, one of eight such centres maintained by the ministry. These seedlings are a special breed because they're virtually disease-free and part of a program to provide high quality seeds to Ontario growers.



Daniel Massey was a successful farmer who bought a bankrupt foundry near Newcastle in 1847, starting a dynasty that would influence harvesting all over the world. Daniel's son Hart got the licence to manufacture an American-designed implement called the Tompkins County Rake, the first working horse-drawn rake. Later known as Sharp's Rake, it became Massey's sales leader. In 1891, Hart merged his company with A. Harris of Brantford. Then on the eve of World War II, Massey-Harris developed the first self-propelled harvesting combine. In one operation, this remarkable machine cut, threshed and cleaned the wheat. The Massey-Harris combine revolutionized wheat farming. What had taken between two and three hundred men to do by hand could be done by one man working one machine.





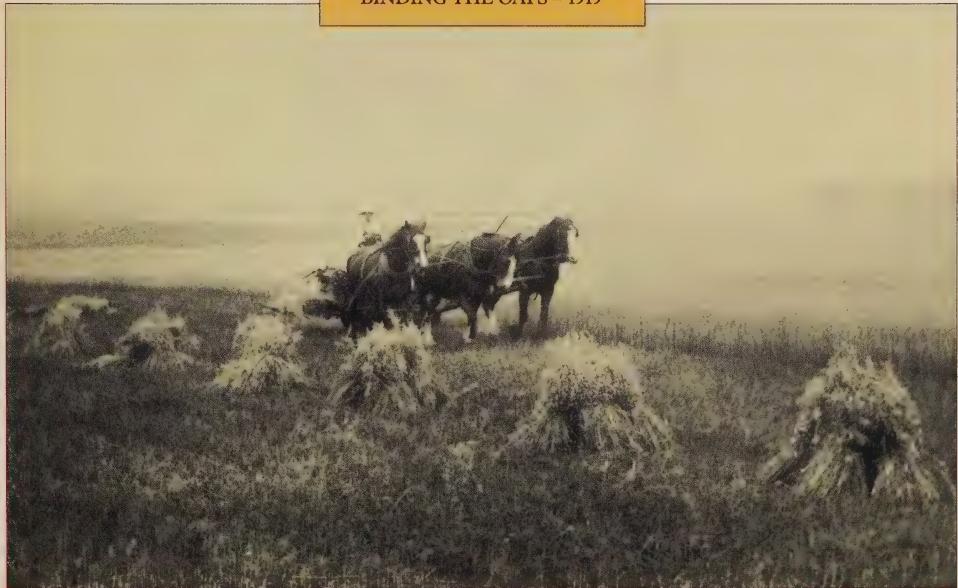
PEOPLE CAN TALK TO YOU ABOUT 200 YEARS OF FARMING 'TIL THEY'RE BLUE IN THE FACE. You can read about it 'til your eyes turn red. But if you want the true feeling of life on the farm down through the years, take yourself and the family to the Ontario Agricultural Museum. It's all there: artifacts, machinery, foods, equipment, clothing and life style; all explained by guides who are knowledgeable, enthusiastic and authentically costumed. There's not a plastic replica on the site; nothing but farms and implements and displays working as they worked long, long ago and not so long ago. It's the genuine article, all of it; a whole day's pleasure. Take the Milton exit off 401 or the Highway 25 exit off the QEW.

SHE WAS A WOMAN OF EXTRAORDINARY ENERGY AND DETERMINATION. When her son died in infancy after drinking impure milk, Adelaide Hoodless channelled those qualities into a series of projects that literally changed our lives. First, she organized Household Science classes at the Hamilton YWCA, then talked the Ontario government into setting up a province-wide program. She got Lord Strathcona to help finance the Ontario Normal School of Domestic Science and Arts. Tobacco millionaire Sir William MacDonald was so impressed with a speech of hers he endowed the MacDonald Institute in Guelph. But Adelaide Hoodless wasn't just a superb talker; she was a superb listener. On February 18, 1897, she listened to Erland Lee, a Wentworth County farmer. She listened very carefully as he spun out his idea for the first Women's Institute in the world. Together they drafted the bylaws and constitution, negotiated with the Minister of



Agriculture for a charter and started the Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario (1897). The Institutes gave farm women a fresh outlook on their lives, certainly. Better, it gave them the power to do something about it.

BINDING THE OATS - 1919



CALENDAR OF FIRST-TIME EVENTS IN THE PROVINCE

- 1752 French settlers in what is now Windsor/Detroit.
- 1784 Land grants to United Empire Loyalists.
- 1794 Shipments of wheat, flour, middlings, lard and potash to Lower Canada.
- 1795 Farmers' Market, Chatham.
- 1801 Cheese and butter shipped down the St. Lawrence River.
- 1814 James Durham's father plants an orchard in Niagara Township.
- 1819 Tobacco, an Indian crop, is grown commercially at Amherstburg.

ONTARIO FIRSTS

- 1820 Dennis Woolverton, Grimsby, sells peaches on the Hamilton market.
- 1825 Egerton Ryerson teaches agriculture to the Credit River Indians.
- 1830 Bringing cuttings from England, Mr. Peasley grafts Gloria Mundi, Ribston Pippin, Permain and English Russett apples.
- 1839 "Upper Canada Herald" a farm journal, published in Kingston.
- 1864 A cheese factory is built in Oxford County.
- 1870 Grange Lodges organized.
- 1878 Self binders introduced.
- 1881 Holstein cattle introduced.
- 1882 Agricultural statistics kept.

- 1884 Cream separator, Ameliasburg.
- 1885 Barrel sprayers came on the market.
Chemical fertilizer experiments at the College Farm, Guelph.
- 1891 "The Travelling Dairy" is sent from Ontario Agricultural College on a demonstration tour.
A co-operative telephone exchange ("Farmer's Alliance") at Hespler.
- 1893 Trial fruit-growing stations set up at Winona, Burlington, Walkerton, Trenton, Leamington, Thornbury and Craighurst.
- 1897 Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario.
- 1902 The Farmers Association.
- 1907 The Dominion Grange and Farmers Association amalgamate.
District Representatives appointed in 6 counties.
- 1908 Rural free delivery postal service.
- 1909 Experimental demonstration orchards, Simcoe County.
- 1910 Chemical weed sprays demonstrated.
- 1913 Ontario Plowing Match, Sunnybrook Farm, York County.
- 1915 Crop dusting by plane.
- 1918 Home Demonstrator appointed in Peel County.
Milking machine installed, Gordon Mann's farm, Peterborough County.
- 1919 With 43 members elected, The United Farmers of Ontario form the government at Queen's Park.
Ontario Butter Grading Station.
- 1931 Rubber tires for tractor wheels.
- 1938 Public Health Act requires pasteurization of all milk for fluid consumption.



She was no bigger than a minute. But Ethel Chapman could walk into a meeting hall and have them eating out of her hand before the rustling subsided. It's said that when she started to talk, the hardwood seat you sat on somehow felt softer. She could write, too. Marvelous long columns in "The Ontario Farmer"; full of insight and humour and good advice. All her writing and talking was aimed at one thing: giving the woman on the farm a sense of her true worth. Giving her this sense at a time when her worth was often considered on par with a draft horse. Ethel Chapman knew all about it, having grown up on a Halton County farm around the turn of the century. She knew that farm women were often chained to an unrelenting series of chores with very little to lighten their lives. That's what she did with her own life: brought a little light in.



1940 The self-propelled combine.

1941 The pick-up field baler.

1944 Junior Farmers' Association of Ontario.

1945 Chemical control of weeds and insects begins with 2-4-D and D.D.T.

1947 The "live" power take-off.

1953 Computerized dairy sire indexing.

1954 Hydrostatic transmissions for tractors (gear shifting on the move).

Exclusive use of frozen semen at breeding centre, Waterloo.

1960 Extensive commercial use of hybrid corn.

1974 Haploid breeding technique for barley.

1981 *Collège de Technologie Agricole et Alimentaire d'Alfred* opens.

"**H**E'D COME AROUND REGULAR" The Rawleigh man started coming around regular about the turn of the century; first in a horse-drawn van, later in a Model T Ford. He trundled right up to the farmhouse door with spices, flavourings, cosmetics, vet supplies and patent medicines. You could place an order with him and he'd bring it around next time. Later, when the telephone came in, you could order in advance and he'd drop it off, rain or shine, winter or summer. He'd also bring a little local news (even a little local gossip disguised as news!). If you gave him lunch he'd pay you a quarter for your trouble. He was a real independent. The Rawleigh Company would supply the products, the advertising and the promotional materials. The Rawleigh man would supply the get up and go. And get up and go he did, flourishing right up through the twenties. But the

Depression savaged the business; then the war followed, bringing its attendant shortages. It was pretty well over by the fifties. Now everyone drives to the supermarket. This may be more efficient, but in some ways the old ways may have been the best ways.





Haldimand County, 1916



South Simcoe County, 1926



Oshawa, 1930



South Simcoe County, 1926



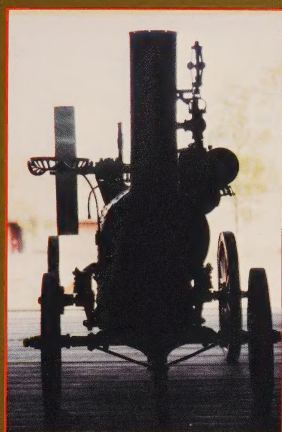
Simcoe County, 1926



Lennox and Addington Counties, 1918



We know the dates (1927 and 1923) but not the places. Do you know these little faces?





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Ministry of
Agriculture
and Food

ONTARIO

Dennis Timbrell, Minister